

Treasury Suggestions for Improving Intelligence

Comments on Intelligence Publications

NID/Daily Bulletin

a. Many of the items are not sufficiently specific with respect to the time that the event occurred. For our briefing purposes in Treasury, it is not enough to say "last week." This relates to another problem - that of identifying "repeat" items. For example, an article may appear in the Petroleum Weekly and it may reappear two or three days later in the NID. In these cases it often is not possible to determine whether it is a new item or not. Would it be possible to put these articles in the NID and the Bulletin the same day they appear in other publications? After all, the NID is supposed to give the President and Cabinet officers the very latest information.

b. Quite often the only source we have on certain developments is the press, including the wire services. Is there some reluctance in using wire service items and referencing them for what they are? On a related matter our Secretary and other senior officials are very much interested in major events related to leading personalities they deal with. Under Secretary Bennett had already gone to Saqqaf's funeral before the event was reported in any intelligence issuance. We first learned of it in the Washington Post.

c. It is often impossible to tell the source of reporting in the NID. It is not clear whether the article represents the CIA view, a report from an embassy, or what. Moreover, uncertainties in the analysis are often not expressed.

d. The long analytical pieces in the NID would benefit from a summary. Quite often the key points are buried in the body of the report. We also feel there is some question as to the wisdom of including exceptionally long pieces in the NID in view of the readership. Simon certainly does not have time to read these pieces and they often have the appearance of "filler."

e. It would be useful for us in Treasury to have a non-codeword daily. While most of our senior officials with an interest in this publication are cleared, many of the personnel in their

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offices are not and we cannot leave codeword material with them awaiting their opportunity to read it. As a consequence, they do not have a chance to see this publication although they are given daily briefings which draw material from it. ?

f. It would be helpful on major events abroad if the Operations Center could take steps to speed reporting from the field particularly when such events deal with important issues (e.g., OPEC meetings). Our knowledge of what transpires often lags by several days what we receive from the wire services. Occasionally we will ask State to ensure immediate reporting by phone but this is sporadic. Apparently there is a reluctance in State to send in immediately factual reports, following these later with embassy analyses -- so Washington waits.

g. Quite often there are articles with an interesting headline or first paragraph which is then undercut by "toing and froing" in the article. This results in a waste of time for us in our preparation for the morning briefing. It would be helpful if the first paragraph carried the main points.

International Petroleum Developments (Weekly)

a. This publication is given very high marks in Treasury and is read by most senior officials with an interest in oil from the Secretary on down.

b. Because of the complexities of the world petroleum situation, it is important that in this publication - more than in most - the language be precise. There have been some slips but generally the quality is high.

c. It is important that the drafters be sensitive to shifts in policy emphasis. These shifts can generally be derived from the cable traffic. Under Secretary Bennett recently called a meeting of his staff with OER/CIA personnel noting that for some time there is now a greater policy interest than previously in petroleum stocks (including floating stocks), consumption, conservation measures, etc., and asked that these new interests be reflected in the Petroleum Weekly. It is hoped that in the future these changes in policy interest can be ascertained to a greater extent by the analysts themselves although we recognize

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this is a two-way street and we must continue to feed back this kind of information.

d. Some time ago when certain sensitive classified information on Mexican oil developments was leaked to the press there was a cut back in the dissemination in the Petroleum Weekly which deprived a number of consumers of the valuable information which this report conveys, or at least delayed their receipt of it. This does not seem an appropriate response to a security leak. There are other things which can be done and were done.

e. Treasury, and indeed much of the Washington policy making community, relies heavily on the statistical data in this publication. For this reason it should be kept as current as possible. Recently Secretary Simon wanted the latest data on imports of oil by consuming countries and found that the latest information available was 1973, even though other reports have presented much more up-to-date information on individual countries.

f. Under Secretary Bennett has already suggested that items in this publication dealing with subjects within Treasury's area of expertise (e.g., financial and monetary affairs) should be checked with Treasury before publication. Needless to say CIA can publish what it wishes but the Agency should have the benefit of Treasury's views.

g. Analysts preparing this report should not only be generally aware of shifts in policy interests, as noted above, but should also be more alert to major trends in developments which relates to these policy interests. For example, Secretary Simon has been making a point for some time about the importance of new oil and gas finds. We specifically requested a recap on these discoveries. OER did an excellent job on this and the Secretary has used the material in a number of major talks and speeches. Again, it is the policy maker's responsibility to alert intelligence to these interests but perhaps more could be done on the initiative of the intelligence reporter.

Economic Intelligence Weekly

a. The new format is a great improvement and the index is helpful. It would be more useful if there were a one or two

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sentence summary of each article in the index. The caption "Overview" is confusing. These items are not in the index and many of the items that are indexed are themselves an overview. It is not quite clear what the section is meant to contain although the pieces themselves have been quite good.

b. The authors of this publication also need to be alert to shifting policy interests. We have noticed a great improvement recently but further attention to this requirement is needed.

c. Consideration should be given to including articles by Treasury analysts.

d. Not all readers of the EIW are readers of the Petroleum Weekly. It would be useful to put particularly interesting items on oil in both publications.

e. As in other publications we hope that items dealing with Treasury's areas of expertise (e.g., financial, monetary, European economy articles, etc.) would be checked with Treasury in advance of publication.

f. As noted above for the Petroleum Weekly, the EIW should make it clear whose evaluation the article represents. Recognizing that CIA is putting its stamp on all of the articles many do represent principally an embassy view, for example, or a report from a reliable source.

CIA Weekly

a. This is not a busy man's publication. The articles need to be summarized in some way either at the beginning of each article or up front in the publication. It is not widely read in Treasury.

b. It is not clear whether this is just a regurgitation of older pieces prepared earlier in the week and glued together or whether it is truly a perspective on the main events of the week. We suspect it is the former -- if so, there should be more of the latter.

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NIE's and NIAM's

These publications do not have very much impact on policy makers in Treasury in the area of international economic affairs. The economic content of these reports is too weak and the relationship in the estimate between political developments and U.S. interests around the world on the one hand and economic developments on the other is almost always very tenuous. When we have attempted at the table to encourage more economic content we often get a defensive reaction or a response that the paper is meant to be a political analysis. How, in today's world such an analysis can be done without substantial reference to the economic situation, escapes me. We believe Colby shares this view but we have not seen much improvement.

NSA Report

The greatest problem with these reports is that they often give the appearance of being analytical even though they rely essentially on a single source; moreover, the drafter is normally not an expert in the field that he is writing about. More dangerous is the practice of sometimes including material from other sources which gives the mistaken impression that the piece is an all-source article, which it is not.

NSSM

This, of course, is not an intelligence publication. Nevertheless, it is probably one of the most effective ways in which intelligence is related to the policy maker's interests. There have been tremendous improvements in the intelligence contribution to these study memoranda in recent years and the presence of experts from the intelligence community on the working groups concerned with these papers has benefitted the policy makers and the intelligence community enormously.

OER Reports

a. It would be helpful if the OER research program could be checked out with Treasury before research studies are undertaken. In the last analysis, of course, the decision on OER's production program is a CIA decision but we may have some ideas on what would

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most interest the policy makers. Needless to say, many of the ad hoc products most valuable to us (which represent the bulk of the effort) have been undertaken at our request or after consultation with OER personnel.

b. OER is being whip-lashed between two imperatives: first the need to prepare timely reports which focus on the particular needs of the policy makers; and second, the need to build their capital stock in terms of the research base, training of personnel, etc. We sense that the latter may be suffering though we are very pleased with the former since our needs have been increasingly well satisfied.

c. The Office of International Affairs in Treasury is currently expanding its research effort on international economic issues which makes it even more important that there be closer consultation between OER and the Office of International Affairs before various projects are undertaken to ensure that projects focus on the right issues and that we minimize unnecessary duplication.

d. Recognizing the personnel constraints under which the Agency operates and on the assumption it is sometimes easier to obtain funds than personnel, we would hope that some research e.g., the elaborate studies involving ruble/dollar ratios could be farmed out to external research under CIA management. We share Maurice Ernst's recent effort to determine the extent to which some of this might be done by joint funding.

Evaluation of Intelligence Products

We have recently been approached by General Morrison regarding an evaluation of the SIGINT effort and by a representative of the DDO with respect to our evaluation of reporting by the clandestine services. If we are to effectively evaluate and feed back in these areas as well as others, it is essential that we establish a workable system. This would require a certain amount of record-keeping so that at the end of a six-month period -- and we need to know the periodicity of these evaluations -- we would be able to bring together our comments in a way which would be most useful

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to the intelligence producer. This is true not only for the evaluation of material coming in from the field but for the evaluation of analytical reporting as well. We are now initiating such a system in Treasury for SIGINT and for clandestine reporting but we feel that the whole subject of evaluation and feed back needs more careful attention on an interagency basis.

Briefing Books

Much of the substantive material which bears on policy decisions and negotiations is incorporated into briefing books and papers prepared for senior policy officials. These include such things as background papers on key topics, identification of information deficiencies, talking points, policy recommendations, etc. Most of this material is prepared in the policy-making departments and agencies and not in the intelligence community. Much of it is of direct interest to elements of the intelligence community and if made available would clearly increase the effectiveness of their contributions. We in Treasury have already released some of this material but a more concerted effort should be made to ensure that as many of these documents as possible are regularly made available to appropriate intelligence officials.

Biographic Intelligence

Bio reports have been very useful to Treasury in connection with negotiations, international meetings and VIP calls on the Secretary.

Effort should be made, however, to more sharply focus these reports on the individuals' role and influence in the policy-making structure and his relationship to other top officials. We also would like to know his future prospects in the power structure. If anything can be done to set up the report in a way which would facilitate quick reading this would be most helpful.

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